


Governance & Ethics Committee

Item #3 Report and Request for Direction on Proposed Amendments to SCSC Chapter 2.155 (“Regulation of Lobbying Activities”) and SCSC Chapter 2.160 (“Calendars of Certain City Officials”) to Better Align the Requirements

March 4, 2024

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Background

In December 2015, the City adopted the following ordinances:

- Chapter 2.155, entitled “Regulations of Lobbyist Activities”, to ensure that there are adequate and effective disclosure of information about efforts to lobby City Government. Lobbyists are required to register with the City and provide semi-annual reports on the lobbying activities that take place. These semi-annual reports require general description of the legislative or administrative action(s) that the lobbyist was retained to influence, and the outcome sought.
- Chapter 2.160, entitled “Calendars of Certain City Officials”, to make the calendars of certain City officials open to the public to provide greater transparency for meetings conducted by elected officials and executive management of the City. Each month these public officials are required to publish their calendars to the City’s website. The calendars require certain general information to be disclosed for all non-internal City related appointments.

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June 7, 2021 Committee Direction:

At the meeting, the former City Attorney presented on the Lobbyist Ordinance and Calendaring Ordinance with a verbal report from City Clerk Hosam Haggag. The Committee approved the following recommendations:

1. Amend the Public Calendar Ordinance to create different reporting standards for meetings with Lobbyists and Non-Lobbyists,
2. Amend the Public Calendar Ordinance that requires Councilmembers and staff who are required to comply with the Ordinance to report on the topics discussed and what was being requested,
3. Amend the Lobbyist Ordinance to require each lobbyist to report on the topics discussed and what was being requested,
4. Change the frequency of the Lobbyist Ordinance reporting requirements to align with the Public Calendar Ordinance to require reporting to be on a monthly cadence, and
5. City Clerk (elected) to return with a standard reporting template and
6. City Manager to return on staffing resources

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Lobbyist Ordinance Changes

- Aligns reports with the Calendaring Ordinance
- Amendments would change Section 2.155.090, Semi-Annual Reporting Requirements to a Monthly Report

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Proposed Calendaring Ordinance Changes

- Add additional disclosure requirements for meetings with lobbyists
- For each non-internal city-related appointment that includes a lobbyist, as defined in Chapter 2.155, the calendar must specify the topics discussed and the requests made by the lobbyist.

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Next Steps:

Provide direction on the proposed amendments to SCSC Chapter 2.155 (“Regulation of Lobbying Activities”) and SCSC Chapter 2.160 (“Calendars of Certain City Officials”)

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March 4, 2024

The image shows a graphic with a dark blue background and a white diagonal stripe. On the left is the official seal of the City of Santa Clara, California, which features a mission building, the year 1852, and the text 'CITY OF SANTA CLARA CALIFORNIA' and 'THE MISSION CITY'. To the right of the seal, the title 'Governance & Ethics Committee' is written in a large, bold, dark blue font. Below the title, the report title is written in a smaller, bold, dark blue font. At the bottom right, the date 'March 4, 2024' is written in a bold, dark blue font.